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ANDREW CARNEGIE

1835-1935

BY

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Andrew Carnegie, Benefactor¹

Andrew Carnegie was born at Dunfermline in Scotland on November 25, 1835. The centenary of his birth is now to be celebrated in most distinguished manner both in the United States and in Great Britain. These celebrations will be echoed throughout the civilized world, for there is no land in which Mr. Carnegie's name is not known and none which the influence of his idealism and foresight have not reached. To what is this amazing circumstance due? Surely not by any means to the fact that he amassed a huge fortune through his development of modern industry, for many others in many lands have done that and their names are neither known nor remembered. The reason for Andrew Carnegie's outstanding position in the history of his time, with fullest assurance that he will be remembered through the years, is that the making of his great fortune was wholly subordinate to his magnificent use of it. If, as his biographers estimate, Andrew Carnegie's fortune at its maximum amounted to some \$360,000,000, he gave more than ninety per cent. of it for the benefit and service of his fellow-men. If those who by reason of ability or opportunity amass great fortunes in industry, in commerce, or in transportation, use their accumulations as Andrew Carnegie used his, little criticism will be heard of the successful man of affairs, for in such case he will have returned to the public service that which he was able to gain for himself, honestly enough, through public coöperation and support.

Observation of scores of those who have been acclaimed as successful men of business, and acquaintance with many of them, is ground for the observation that the modern multimillionaire has before him four stages of possible evolution.

¹ Reprinted by permission from the *New York Herald Tribune* of November 24, 1935

The first of these is the acquisitive stage, when his whole concern is with making money and amassing a fortune. The second is the possessive stage, when he hugs his wealth to his person and identifies it with himself and himself with it. This is as far as most multimillionaires ever get. It requires both large intelligence and fine character to go farther. The third stage is the contemplative. When this is reached, the multimillionaire asks, sometimes quizzically, sometimes seriously, what am I going to do with this money? He usually answers this question by pouring it out in huge sums upon the members of his immediate family, thereby wrecking their lives and those of their children and grandchildren, until his accumulation is fortunately dissipated. But it is only dissipated after it has done its demoralizing work. The fourth and final stage of this evolution is the distributive. When this is reached, the possessor of great wealth is in position to become an outstanding public servant. If his ideals are high, his judgment good, his knowledge of men well tested by experience, then he may quickly climb to the highest level of public service. This Andrew Carnegie did.

Born a Scot, and early becoming deeply immersed in American life and thought, Andrew Carnegie had from his young manhood a truly amazing insight into the proper meaning and significance of wealth. So far back as 1868 when he was but thirty-three years of age and already had an income of some \$50,000 a year—truly a huge sum for those days—he wrote these extraordinary words:

Beyond this never earn—make no effort to increase fortune, but spend the surplus each year for benevolent purposes. Cast aside business forever except for others.

Settle in Oxford and get a thorough education, making the acquaintance of literary men—this will take three years active work—pay especial attention to speaking in public. Settle then in London and purchase a controlling interest in some newspaper or live review and give the general management of it attention, taking a part in public matters, especially those connected with education and improvement of the poorer classes.

Man must have an idol—the amassing of wealth is one of the worst species of idolatry—no idol more debasing than the worship of money. Whatever I engage in I must push inordinately; therefore should I be careful to choose that life which will be the most elevating in its character. To continue much longer overwhelmed by business cares and with most of my thoughts wholly upon the way to make more money in the shortest time, must degrade me beyond hope of permanent recovery.

Surely this is an extraordinary revelation of mind and character on the part of a young man who was already demonstrating a capacity to make money in exceptional fashion, but who refused to be either tempted by it or paralyzed by it, as is unhappily the almost uniform experience of modern men in like situation.

Something more than twenty years later, Andrew Carnegie wrote his famous article for the *North American Review* which led to giving the widest currency to his phrase that he should consider it disgraceful to die a rich man. John Morley wrote to Andrew Carnegie that these words would stick to him forever as an unreserved condemnation of those dying rich. Oddly enough, there appeared almost simultaneously Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* and Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, and for some time Henry George, Edward Bellamy, and Andrew Carnegie were all three widely quoted in the attempt to answer the question, what are we going to do with our rich men?

Andrew Carnegie had another marked characteristic which greatly broadened his intelligence and his outlook, strengthened his character, and guided his judgment in all his public benefactions and relationships. This was the habit which he early formed of making the acquaintance and the friendship of outstanding leaders in the intellectual, the artistic, and the public life of his time, and attaching them to himself in bonds of close friendship. What Mr. Gladstone and John Morley and Elihu Root meant to Andrew Carnegie is well known to his intimate friends, and some record of it all may be

found on the printed pages of his life and personal writings. During his months at Skibo each summer, he was surrounded by a group of men which probably could not be reproduced anywhere else on earth. There were to be found prime ministers, archbishops, heads of universities, great judges and members of the Bar, leading scholars, men of letters and men of science, all welded by Andrew Carnegie's hospitable personality into a company of surpassing interest and significance. The conversation during a week or two at Skibo in those days will never be forgotten by any who were so fortunate as to take part in it.

It was because of Andrew Carnegie's fixed purpose to use his fortune for the public service and to be guided in so doing by the judgment of the ablest men of his time, that when the distribution of his vast accumulation was made, it took so remarkable and so unprecedented a form. Andrew Carnegie began to think of this distribution long before it actually took place. He turned the whole matter over in his mind again and again. He discussed it with his intimate friends and distinguished counselors both in Great Britain and in the United States. He began in various small ways—small they must be called in comparison with what was to come—and brought comfort and happiness time and again where there had been distress and suffering, and also, through his gifts for public libraries, put hundreds of communities in possession of those instruments for reading and study of which they had previously been deprived.

When Andrew Carnegie was ready to begin the final distribution of his vast accumulation, which, of course, was only after the sale of his property to the United States Steel Corporation, his mind moved along certain very definite but different lines. He intended from the first to do for his native land and his birthplace something that would testify his affection for them both; therefore there came the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, the Carnegie Trust for the Uni-

versities of Scotland, and the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, the names of which indicate their aim and purpose.

To testify to his regard for the city of Pittsburgh, where the foundations of his fortune had been laid, he brought into existence the Carnegie Institute, the fine work of which for a long generation is well known everywhere. Acting upon a chance suggestion of the late Richard Watson Gilder, he established the Carnegie Hero Fund in order that there might be recognition of heroic acts performed in the peaceful walks of life and that pensions might be granted to heroes of civil life who had been incapacitated through some fine act of their own, and to their widows and dependents.

There remain the three great dominating intellectual interests of Andrew Carnegie's later years. These were the advancement of scientific knowledge, the better protection of the academic teacher against the needs of dependent old age and illness, and the abolition of war by the establishment of international peace on a firm moral and political foundation. In respect to all these proposed benefactions, Andrew Carnegie's mind thought in terms of a unit of ten million dollars. His practical sagacity led him to protect his chosen Trustees and his ideals by the provision that, if the endowment of ten million dollars proved to be too much for the designated purpose, his Trustees might apply the income of their capital fund to some allied object of their own choosing. On the other hand, he repeated again and again that if the sum of ten million dollars should prove insufficient as an endowment for the purpose which he had selected, then recourse should be had to the Trustees of his residuary estate, the primary purpose of which was to protect these specific Trusts and to see that they received enough support to go forward toward the accomplishment of their aims. It was for the carrying out of these purposes and for these ends that the Carnegie Corporation came into existence, holding the undistributed portion of Andrew Carnegie's great fortune. A majority of the orig-

inal Trustees were the executive heads of the separate benefactions which have been named, and, had they chosen to do so, they might have divided the entire residuary estate of Andrew Carnegie among their own several Trusts. Fortunately, they pursued a wiser and more far-sighted course, and while the primary moral obligation upon the Carnegie Corporation remains to see to it that the separate Trusts are adequately endowed for the accomplishment of their several purposes, there is also opportunity for a still broader and more varied use of the income of the Corporation's endowment fund which, if wisely directed, may well make Andrew Carnegie's name famous and beloved throughout this land, not only for generations, but for centuries to come. If one wishes to know what Andrew Carnegie's benefactions have already accomplished, let him turn to the elaborate reports of the several Trusts which are published year by year and which set out in fullest detail just how every dollar of income is spent and with what result. The causes of advancement of scientific knowledge, of the protection of the college and university teacher, and of the education of the world's public opinion toward that international coöperation which alone can establish international prosperity and peace, have gone forward mightily year by year. Subtract the effect of Andrew Carnegie's benefactions from these noteworthy objects, and their history during the last quarter-century could not be written.

Andrew Carnegie's faith in his fellow-man and his lofty idealism are nowhere better shown than in his letter, dated December 14, 1910, to those whom he first chose as Trustees of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. In that letter he wrote these words:

When civilized nations enter into such treaties as named, and war is discarded as disgraceful to civilized men, as personal war (duelling) and man selling and buying (slavery) have been discarded within the wide boundaries of our English-speaking race, the Trustees will please then consider what is the next most degrading remaining

evil or evils whose banishment—or what new elevating element or elements if introduced or fostered, or both combined—would most advance the progress, elevation, and happiness of man, and so on from century to century without end, my Trustees of each age shall determine how they can best aid man in his upward march to higher and higher stages of development unceasingly; for now we know that man was created, not with an instinct for his own degradation, but imbued with the desire and the power for improvement to which, perchance, there may be no limit short of perfection even here in this life upon earth.

Let my Trustees therefore ask themselves from time to time, from age to age, how they can best help man in his glorious ascent onward and upward, and to this end devote this fund.

Surely no loftier or more stimulating appeal could be made to any group of American citizens charged with the use of the income of a great fund.

By unhappy coincidence, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace had only just been organized when the Great War threw its shadow over the life of the world. Following its close, no small portion of the accumulated income of the Endowment was used by the Trustees in reconstructing parts of the area devastated by the appalling conflict of 1914-1918. In France, the typical commune of Fargnières in the Aisne was reconstructed as to its center part and its public buildings, and the beautiful new library was built at Rheims to take the place of that which the enemy bombardment had destroyed. In Belgium, the wrecked library at Louvain was succeeded by a well-planned and thoroughly modern building to care for the books and manuscripts of the notable body of scholars assembled at the university in that town. A similar service was performed for the city of Belgrade in what had been Serbia. In many other less conspicuous ways the losses and sufferings of the war were in some measure relieved. Following the establishment of peace, the whole energy of the Carnegie Endowment, with the counsel and coöperation of leading statesmen, scholars, and men of affairs in almost every land, has been devoted to the edu-

cation of public opinion toward the acceptance of those policies and institutions of international coöperation upon which alone depend the prosperity of every people and the peace of the world. Andrew Carnegie's vision has not yet been realized, but his Trustees have not lessened their respect for his ideals or their confidence in them. It is often darkest just before the dawn and it may well be that the economic, the social, and the political punishment which vast portions of the human race are now receiving will be the prelude to a very different and much brighter day. In that Andrew Carnegie implicitly believed and in that his faithful Trustees believe.

Andrew Carnegie Centenary¹

This is no formal or conventional gathering. We are not here simply because one hundred years have passed. We are here drawn by the force and the power of an affectionate appreciation and understanding of a great personality and a great servant of his fellow-men.

In this modern world we are busily engaged in producing new types of human beings for accomplishment and for service. We have known century after century the philosopher, the poet, the dramatist, the architect, the sculptor, the painter, the discoverer, the statesman. We are now producing, and we are drawn here because our time has produced, the lover of his kind, the man who will give expression to his ideals and his hopes in terms of human service.

There is much discussion in every part of the world just now as to our economic principles, our social relationships and our political organization. There are sharp and wide differences of opinion and many things are said in many languages, some wise, some foolish, very, very foolish. But among it all, those of us in the Western world particularly who, under the influence of the impulse given us by ancient Greece and ancient Rome, have been moving for more than 2000 years on a reasonably definite path toward the development of character and intelligence and their expression in terms of service—those of us who are in that fortunate position find ourselves under sharp and constant criticism and attack. But, after all, human experience counts for something, counts for much we like to believe, and out of it and from it we learn those new ways of developing intelligence and

¹ Delivered at a commemorative meeting in the New York Academy of Medicine, November 26, 1935, President Butler presiding.

character and those new forms of expressing them, which always and everywhere keep the opportunities offered by liberty in step with the march of time and of progress.

Mr. Carnegie was in one sense a product of his time. He was in one sense an exemplar of the forces which have made the time in which he lived. He was in one sense a prophet of the new day when service will everywhere, not displace profit, but supersede it as a controlling motive.

The extraordinary thing to me about Andrew Carnegie's personality and life is that so early he had the vision of its ideal and so constantly and so steadily and so uninterruptedly did he move toward that accomplishment. It is not for me to go at any length into Mr. Carnegie's personality and the forces which made it or into its manifold forms of expression, but this much I may say: He was an extraordinary combination of all the ruling, dominating and attractive characteristics of the Scot, transfused with the elasticity, the adaptability and the quick-moving progress of our American life and thought.

Dr. Samuel Johnson said many cynical things about Scotland and the Scot, but he said one thing, doubtless in a spirit of sarcasm, which is very true. He said, "You can make a great deal of a Scot if you catch him young enough." Mr. Carnegie began his making early. It was only in the adolescent period that he began to feel the force of the new influences that were eventually to become so powerful and to shape his life, but when those influences began to work and took large control of his personality and his character, they showed him to be that amazing intermingling of Scot and American that made him what he was. And it may well be as the years pass that our American psychology will have made few, if any, larger contributions to the making of personality than those which were exhibited in the life and work of Andrew Carnegie.

It is not easy to visualize a man of affairs, large, abundant affairs, as thinking always and constantly in terms of service

to his fellow-man, but such was Mr. Carnegie's habit from the time that he was twenty-five or thirty years of age. Those of us who were honored by his confidence and made happy by his friendship knew well with what accuracy his mind worked, with what precision of judgment and understanding it weighed motives, contrasted ideals and tested methods, and how completely he must be convinced not only of the righteousness but of the wisdom of a given course of public service before he entered upon it. And with all this, there went that amazing appeal which his nature had to his friend in terms of affection.

We all loved Andrew Carnegie. We loved to be with him, to talk to him, to hear his questions, his observations on the philosophy of life, his judgment of men and policies and, above all, to feel and to see the power of his ideals. Nothing could weaken or discourage Andrew Carnegie's faith in an ideal which he had made his own.

Look out upon this world of 1935 and tell me what could be more perfect in faith than the words of a man who said to the Trustees of one of his great Trusts: "When the peace of the world shall have been established, you may then select what you consider to be the next most important end to be attained." Surely there is idealism speaking in terms of highest faith and highest confidence! Without faith, without confidence, ideals are weak and meaningless.

The power of Andrew Carnegie's name, the blessings which are showered upon him today and tonight in every part of the world where these celebrations are going forward, are due to his faith in those high and lofty purposes which he had made his own. The giving to their accomplishment of a huge fortune, magnificent as it was, is after all secondary in importance. The main thing was that that personality, that mind, that character, that temperament, should have had those visions and should have determined to live and to die, if need be, for their accomplishment.

It is such a man, such a personality, that we celebrate to-

night and toward whom many of us can turn with tears in our eyes, with deep affection, appreciation and thanksgiving. It is becoming that the day of national Thanksgiving should quickly follow our public emphasis upon this personality, for we may well give thanks that the world saw him and knew him, that Scotland produced him, that America gave him his home, his chance and his opportunity and that the whole world offered him its citizenship because of his abundant understanding of his fellow-men in every part of every land.

In Memory of Andrew Carnegie¹

As the years pass, I find that it grows not easier, but more difficult, to speak of Mr. Carnegie. As the material incidents connected with his life and with our association fade away and become dimmer in memory, the intangible and imponderable side of his personality and his nature gains new force and power in my mind and in my remembrance of him.

I like to think of so many of those intimate personal meetings and contacts where great ideas and high ideals were discussed, where strong and powerful personalities were brought into consultation, and where forces were wrought into being and shaped, which are going to have much to do with the conduct of the life of this world and with its happiness for indefinite generations to come.

Mr. Carnegie had a characteristic rarely found in men who have been of outstanding success in the world of industry and commerce and finance. He sought the companionship of the great. He loved to take counsel from the wisest and most powerful men of his time, and enjoyed as much if not more than anyone I have ever known, the friendship and the converse with leaders in the world of letters, of music, of the fine arts, of the drama, to say nothing of statesmanship and of the Church. At Skibo, where he spent the summer months year after year, he made that castle a capital of the mind and of the spirit. All of us who were privileged to take part in those amazing experiences not only can never forget them, but we can never adequately estimate what they meant to us in the making and shaping and enriching of our own minds and personalities, and in the shaping and guiding of our own individual life work.

¹ Concluding the annual meeting of the Trustees of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, on November 27, 1935.

Probably the three men who meant more to Mr. Carnegie than any others, taking his whole rich life in its entirety, were Mr. Gladstone, John Morley, and Elihu Root. These are three men of widely different type of mind, of nature, and of intellectual content, but they were all men of the very highest type of intellectual capacity and of the very loftiest type of purpose and of ideals. Mr. Gladstone did not hesitate to conceal his amusement at many of Mr. Carnegie's characteristics. Indeed, he thought it almost unbecoming in a Scot to be quite so generous. John Morley looked at Mr. Carnegie from a different point of view and through another glass. He was what we should today call an advanced liberal, what his contemporaries called a pronounced radical; and what attracted him to Mr. Carnegie was Mr. Carnegie's interest in his fellow-man, his real, his sincere, his deep personal concern for the welfare of that fellow-man, for the enrichment of his mind, for the increasing comfort and satisfaction of his body, and for the guidance of his purpose and policies in the social order.

You may remember that Mr. Carnegie was a great friend of Lord Acton and that when the Acton Library was to be disposed of the question came as to how it could be kept together. Mr. Carnegie spent no time in asking difficult questions. He bought the library and presented it to John Morley. He then made it possible for Mr. John Morley—Lord Morley, as he became later—to build that splendid and capacious library in his house at Wimbledon, in which he passed the latest years of his life. And then John Morley did his fine thing. He retaliated by leaving the Acton Library to the University of Cambridge, where Acton had been Professor of History. So the gift to Cambridge, which it was not possible to make at the time of Acton's death, because of financial conditions, was carried out indirectly through Mr. Carnegie and John Morley. Today that Acton Library is where Acton would have had it and where scholars for all time can resort to it for use, having enriched John Morley and made him happy during the ten or fifteen closing years of his life.

Mr. Root's attraction for Mr. Carnegie was still different. In him, Mr. Carnegie found a calm, cool, detached, sympathetic adviser, a man who shared his enthusiasms but was always quick to show him their practical limitations and how those enthusiasms could best be harnessed to some organized form or capacity for expression that have increased the power which Mr. Carnegie wanted them to have.

It was Mr. Carnegie's many-sidedness which enabled these three different men to mean so much to him as they did, and him to mean as much to them as they felt he did.

A life that rested on so broad and rich a foundation, that sought such companionships and was constantly in pursuit of these ideals was truly, my friends, a real life of the highest type. It is not easy, perhaps not possible, to say a word in your presence concerning him which has not been said before. It is not easy, perhaps not possible, to repeat some of the finest and best things that have been said, but here at this centenary celebration we can feel ourselves at the crossing of the roads, at the point where all the paths of the past come together for a moment, and from which the paths of the future are going to diverge.

What greater responsibility could any one of us bear than to have been asked by him, or by those whom he asked, to assume a share in the conservation of those forces which he set in motion, in their direction and guidance for human betterment through the next generation? We all have our personal associations, our bases of life and coöperation, but by the side of them certainly must stand this great, commanding and controlling responsibility not merely to care for and wisely dispose of the income of great funds. Others have that to do in quite different relationships of life. That task is ours, to be sure, but more than that and above that is the conservation and pursuit of his purposes, of the ideals which he saw so clearly, concerning which he was able to speak and to write with all the force and power of a philosopher and a man of letters.

One of the charming and appealing incidents of Mr. Carnegie's early career is that expressed desire of his—when he was little more than thirty years of age and already had acquired an income which to men of academic relationship seems stupendously large—the expressed desire to go to Oxford for three years and there lay the basis for a liberal education. Tell me where in the history of great captains of industry, of commerce and of finance, there has been another aspiration of that character and that kind? He selected Oxford because of what the name of Gladstone meant to him and because of its associations and its rich import. What he was after was something which the circumstances of his youth and early training had denied him.

We are the builders of Mr. Carnegie's invisible monuments. They are rising not in brick or stone or marble or steel, but they are rising in the hearts and minds of men on every continent and in every land. Wherever a new scientific discovery is made or finds application, there may be found the power of his pen and of his zeal. Wherever there are forces at work for the improvement of mankind, for helping men to build a peaceful and a prosperous civilization, there his hand is reached out to help, to guide and to bless. It is a marvelous picture. One dwells on it, whether he will or no, with increasing affection and increasing understanding.

There are not many of us left who were in that first group of his counselors. Elihu Root and Henry Pritchett are two of those who were in his counsel when these undertakings were being formulated, when even their names were being chosen. And how difficult it was to find nouns to serve as the designation of these different Trusts! We labored a long time over Institution, Foundation, Endowment, Corporation, and even today we have not made the public understand. We wanted the name Carnegie in every one of them. That was their common denominator. We wanted each of them to have a characteristic name, one suited to the undertaking which it

was to guide, to shape, and the result is that which you know so well.

I still hope that I may be spared to see rise in this town Carnegie House, not a great monumental building which he never would have permitted, but a convenient and comfortable home away from banks and trust companies and centers of business, where these several undertakings may have their administrative offices, where meetings such as we have had today may be held, where men and women, inspired by Mr. Carnegie's spirit, may come and go, where we may be surrounded by the pictures and the books which were his, which gave charm, contentment and beauty to his house, and where, apart from finance and its administration, away from the busy marts of trade and the noise and clamor, the streets of business, these Trustees may come for generations to sit in the physical shadow which would accompany the personal shadow of this rich and fine personality. London has its Holland House, its Devonshire House, its Lansdowne House, each of which marks a great name and noble family. I want to see a Carnegie House which will be the home, peaceful, quiet, scholarly, thoughtful home of the administration of the great public service Trusts which he brought into being.

We have finished the first hundred years since he came upon this earth. These intangible, imponderable forces of which I speak are not measured by time and they do not pass away through any exhaustion of effort. Indeed, effort, successful effort, enriches them each and all and gives them new power and new sense of leadership and guidance.

On Sunday last I listened by the radio to the Earl of Elgin and to Dr. John Finley, speaking to the world from the little cottage at Dunfermline in which Andrew Carnegie was born. They drew, each of them, a beautiful and charming picture of what that little cottage meant to the world, to Fife, to Scotland, to Great Britain and to America, to the entire civilized world, and when one thought that there by the road-

side, in what we have been taught to look upon as an inconspicuous and unimportant Scottish town in Fife, there was born the personality which could generate all this into our twentieth century world, why, in the name of common sense, should we ever dream of despairing of happiness, of progress and of conquest for the ideal?

At the end of the hundred years, let us drink in affectionate memory to the long life, the everlasting life, of Andrew Carnegie.

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